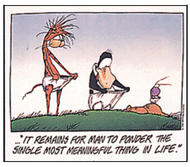


SO MUCH SLIME, SO LITTLE TIME
The Transgression of Pro-Feminism

The media is the new church; the television its altar; the image its sacrament; the First Amendment its bible; and any critique its blasphemy. Libertarians are the new evangelists, among them the various nudist, naturist and pedophile magazines -- pumped-up with select images of nude, white, young, able, bonsaied, objectified women and children -- preaching, not "transgression" as they claim, but age-old patriarchal privilege and rightfulness. And now, we even find "pro-feminist" men's magazines helping pedophiles recruit new assaulters.

reprinted from the ICONoclast & (Changing Men Issue #25)

The following article was provoked by an extreme violation of anti-sexist principles exhibited by the pro-feminist men's magazine, *Changing Men (C-Men)* in its treatment of oppressive sex, specifically in its latest, "Sex & Sexuality" issue (#24). The issue even included an ad for NAMBLA, the incest-and-pedophilia-advocating North American Man-Boy Love Association. This wasn't the first inroad of pedophiles into the pro-feminist movement either.

Published in Madison, Wisconsin for fifteen years *C-Men* Magazine is affiliated with the National Organization for Men Against Sexism (NOMAS). It is a major voice for the pro-feminist men's movement focusing on "sex, politics, and gender" issues. After months of struggling with the editors, the article printed here will almost surely be published in issue #25 of their magazine. This article has also been published in Off Our Backs, a Washington D.C. based feminist newspaper.

Besides the story told here there is another whole separate one that will be told eventually about *C-Men's* and the NOMAS leadership council's reaction when faced with and challenged about these issues. At this point the magazine has expressed deep regret at running two pedophile ads. But, at this point, the position that NOMAS will take is not so clear.

NOMAS has thus far released a statement saying they were shocked to see one of the ads appear. However, one of the main points of contention in the same issue with the NAMBLA ad is a feature article written by one of the founders of their organization. At this time it seems that the NOMAS debate is beginning to center around whether a 17-year-old having sex with a 12-year-old (and a 40 year old therapist writing about it for the enjoyment of adult pro-feminist men in an unexamined, enthusiastic narrative) is inappropriate or not. A significant number of the NOMAS leadership collective have voiced strong opinions that the age difference does not necessarily denote an imbalance in power and therefor abuse. There are many who disagree.

Since many feminists and pro-feminists are no longer willing to align with anyone who refuses to incorporate a critical analysis about power relationships-including when it comes to sex -- there are crucial lines to be drawn here by the pro-feminist and feminist movement.

I am pissed off I have to write this article in the first place, deeply disappointed in *Changing Men's* editors, and more than worried about their general readership, too. I mean, do you guys *get off* on this stuff, or what? If you do, a lot of women who are considering you and NOMAS allies want to know, and we want to know *now*. It's too late for a simple apology from the editors to suffice. Unless *Changing Men* radically changes *itself*, its editorial and advertising guidelines, and becomes more accountable for what it chooses to publish, I'm going to join with others to organize a major boycott.

This critique will step outside the usual liberal platitudes where so many presently stand navel-deep in the quicksand of traditional, unaccountable libertarianism. It will document how the pedophile movement is a contradiction and a threat to the pro-feminist, and indeed to any progressive, egalitarian, agenda. It will offer concrete steps that pro-feminist men can take to counter the pedophile agenda. It is a call for male editors, writers and readers, even the more "sensitized" ones, to become more accountable to victims of sexual abuse. Expect it to be confrontive and dead serious about ending sexism - an "in-your-face," challenge of the *sanctity* of male sexual self-interest.

There are numerous things besides the pedophile ad for NAMBLA that have my hackles up about the latest issue of this magazine. There's Jeff Bean's hot article about "First Loves," about when the author was "looking into [the child's] pink-lipped boyish face . . . smelling his youthful skin. . . and being afraid to crush him" (and wanting to possess him, and all) back when he was 17 and had sex with a 12-year-old. The first-person narrative, all about sex and the joy of trying to pressure several boys into it, was written by a "therapist . . . leader and organizer in the feminist men's movement . . . " and a big wheel in NOMAS. And what about the accompanying *petite mort* artsy-fartsy cheesecake shot? (p. 29) Was all that goop smeared over the unconscious or sleeping models meant to suggest blood? Only the editors know for sure.

It's too bad that *C-Men* chose to publish an article so true to the canon of child pornography. It isn't just the age differential, either. Throughout, Beane just revels in power imbalance; and his wet dream nostalgia is written for *adult men* about children. Beane's sexual objectification of youths is ominously consistent with *C-Men* running an ad for NAMBLA in the same issue. And what are we to think about the editors' placement of the "Beloved Brothers" t-shirt ad right smack-dab next to Beane's fond memories of what many are interpreting to be child sexual abuse? It reads: "Always remember our LOVE is GOOD our MANHOOD is COMPLETE and without LIMITS". Without limits?! Hmmm.

Speaking of operating without limits: What about the ad for *Libido* magazine with that dehumanized woman in her *upper*-classy basic-black cocktail dress, her head cropped so that only her fetishized, lipsticked mouth is showing, as her breasts are groped by her own and anonymous hands, one of them gloved (What's so fucking erotic about that?!)? But hey, she's smiling so I guess she's *supposed* to like being manhandled, as in any pornography. The ad even quotes a rave review of *Libido* from *Playboy*. (*Playboy* being, of course, that other pro-feminist men's magazine; yup, these days even Hef can get away with calling himself a feminist.)

I will never support any publication that defends their entitlement to publish such a problematic picture unless it were being used to *challenge* exploitation. Besides, what's that dehumanizing, exploitative, image doing perched just above an ad for the video series entitled, "Counseling the Sexual Abuse Survivor"? Insensitive as hell, I'd say. Seeing the names of Florence Rush, Diana Russell, Louise Armstrong, Sandra Butler, Lucy Berliner and David Finkelhor (all researchers and/or activists against sexual abuse) juxtaposed with the *Libido* ad made me want to vomit. Wonder how they feel knowing a magazine committed to "non-oppressive masculinity" does this to them and their work? *(The two images reproduced here are reproduced from Libido around the same period.)*

Completing the theme for the whole issue was Duane Allen's "Invitation to Transgressive Sex" (p. 4), an appeal to "violate playfully the current genres of sexuality" in which Allen also endorses advocates of sado-masochistic pornography. Allen expresses such confusion about oppression that he actually summons visions of orgies as a valid form of opposition to our war on Iraq: "i.e. using sexual energy/pleasure to counterbalance violence, hatred, repression." As if Amerikans pleasuring each other counterbalanced the death and devastation we visit on non-Amerikans! Well, suck my Patriot . . . No wonder. If whips, chains and Nazi/Jew scenarios can engender such swell(ing) hard-ons in those exploring sado-masochistic (more precisely sado-fascist) scenarios, then sexualizing war might get them to just *explode* . . . with pleasure, that is. Still, many of us, when we want to quench our anti-oppression passions, will be too busy fucking up deserving political targets to be lolling around in bed too much with anybody. But won't the next 200,000 Iraqis feel great knowing that at least someone in the U.S.A. *does* give a flying fuck about their massacre?

"TRANSGRESSION ANYONE?"

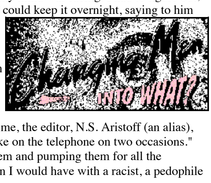
NAMBLA is an organization dedicated to the *total* elimination of sexual age-of-consent statutes. Its members believe that children any age, even under 10 years old, should have "free choice" regarding sexual involvements with adults. It's hard to imagine how NAMBLA keeps children from flocking to their meetings since, according to them and their allies, so many children experience wonderful, positive sexual experiences with grown-ups. But, as I and other researchers have ascertained, NAMBLA's meetings are made up nearly exclusively of adult, white men.

The classified ad in the last issue of *C-Men* for NAMBLA (#24, p. 61) reads: "NAMBLA seeks justice for men and boys interested in consensual relationships. Our monthly Bulletin features news, fiction, letters, pictures. Mailed discreetly. Subscribe!"

What was this ad doing in *C-Men*? It didn't "just happen". Somebody took NAMBLA's money, typed the ad, layed it out, and proofed it. Shit didn't just happen. Decisions were made. Who made them?

But there is more. Back in the winter of 1987 one of the editors of *C-Men* (while we were visiting at the house of a mutual friend) handed me the premiere issue (Autumn 1987) of *Uncommon Desires (UD)*, a pedophile magazine, catering to "man-girl sex" enthusiasts. He asked me what I thought of it.

The moment I read the table of contents I knew I had my hands on an important document. I nonchalantly browsed through it, but my mind was racing. I had to figure out, quick, what needed to be done about this obviously (if I may borrow from Duane Allen the term) "transgressive" journal. I asked him if I could keep it overnight, saying to him that I wanted more time to look at it before formulating any opinion. He said OK. I was up all night reading it and making phone calls. The next day I made about 50 copies, and mailed it to every cop and postal inspector I could find an address for.



Then, in the next issue of *Changing Men* (#19, p. 44) I noticed the following ad: "Uncommon Desires. Non-fiction journal about girl love. Power, equality, consent, social/sexual oppression of girls in patriarchy, ethical intergenerational relationships. Does not contain or advertise any photographs or written erotica."

When I saw that pedophile ad I was very upset because I knew *C-Men* was aware of the publication before the *UD* ad appeared in their magazine. But I didn't say anything at the time. Instead, partly as a result of that ad, I began an undercover correspondence with the editor of *Uncommon Desires*. I pretended I was a pro-feminist man in North Carolina who'd seen the ad in *C-Men*. In his second letter to me, the editor, N.S. Aristoff (an alias), wrote: "By the way, *Changing Men* was very positive (or at least non-judgmental) about *UD* - [the editor] in particular, with whom I spoke on the telephone on two occasions."

What?! My policy, when I'm talking to men who promote having sex with children, is that I am either lying through my teeth to them and pumping them for all the information I can get to be used against them, or I'm confronting them in ways they will never be able to forget. Same as any conversation I would have with a racist, a pedophile would *never* mistake my position to be condoning abusive behavior - unless I decided I *wanted* him to for my own purposes.

In a recent conversation the editor told me he didn't remember seeing the magazine, showing it to me, talking to the editor of *UD* on the phone twice, or having run the *UD* or NAMBLA ads. The other managing editor also denies knowingly having run this ad. All of them claim they would *not* have run these ads had they been aware of them. Too bad these appear to have been truly unimportant and unremarkable incidents to them all. What are editors for, anyway?

When they say this I tend to believe them. They have even agreed that my turning over *UD* to law enforcement was the "appropriate action to take". Still they have some explaining to do. Until they show some accountability for their actions I am uncomfortable with them being let off the hook. To do so would be, perhaps, dangerously naive - particularly in light of Jeff Beane's ode to man-boy love article in the same issue with the NAMBLA ad.

It's easy to see that liberalism, wishy-washy analysis, and complicitous silence may all be interpreted, as it was in this situation, as approval for the pedophile's all too common "desires." And it's a task to figure out whether mistakes like these, made out of stupidity and sloppiness, are better or worse than the choices based on intentional complicity with abusers.

Two facts remain, regardless of the actual intentions of the editors of *C-Men*: 1. They have been irresponsible in running these ads; 2. their behavior was sufficiently vague as to be misconstrued as supportive and/or non-judgmental by the editor of *UD* (and, I might add, one activist against sexual violence). Don't these pro-feminist activists need to be a lot more responsible in their general editorial practices and, specifically, in challenging and confronting known pedophiles?

HOW TO HAVE SEX WITH KIDS

Discovering the existence of *Uncommon Desires* was important enough to me that I was unable to forget it. From the moment I found out about it, I began to ferret out all the information I could about this magazine and the *extensive* pedophile network related to it.

Uncommon Desires (Passion Press) purports to be a "feminist" organization espousing "the voice of a politically-conscious girl-love underground." It works to establish cultural and legal justifications for adult men having sex with female children. Its editor alleges that *UD* is *not* "an active network of individuals creating and exchanging erotica and exploiting children . . . Our underground does none of this. We only raise political consciousness and prick the conscience of those who would bring harm to others." From what I gather, the harm they are speaking of would come from overzealous child protectors, and not from men who use children sexually. The membership is described as: "drawn together because of deep concern for the girls [they] love."

Nevertheless some of the *UD* writers (many using aliases) have been arrested on child pornography charges. One name I recognized in the table of contents of that first issue was the "sex researcher" David Sonenschein (a.k.a. David Gordon). Sonenschein is founder of the Austin Pedophile Study Group, an articulate proponent for sado-fascism, and the author of a self-published pamphlet called *How To Have Sex With Kids*. This man is just one of the many sexual predators working closely with the editor of *UD*. So much slime, So little time.

UD networks and functions as the lesser known brother publication to the NAMBLA Bulletin, and seeks the same acceptance and success by promoting "girl-love" and the "attraction to pre-pubescent or pubescent girls" through legal channels. *UD* defines this "attraction" (in the publication at least) as a "loving and nurturing erotic/affectional (though *not necessarily* sexualized) attraction."

Yet, despite any disclaimers, every page of *UD* - including its statistical information on sexual attraction to children and its sophisticated philosophical justifications for pedophilia - is all about adults' *sex* with young girls. Both *UD* and the NAMBLA Bulletin promote incest and child sexual abuse.

Pedophile groups are men's organizations and they do a lot of 'male bonding' - constantly exchanging subscribers, information, photographs and sometimes even children. In a mailing to the general readership in December, 1990, the editor of *UD* states: "Without NAMBLA, *UD* would not even exist!" He admits that he gets most of his subscriptions from ads run in the NAMBLA Bulletin. The editor says that he thinks that girl "lovers" are reading the NAMBLA Bulletin because there's nothing else available that advocates sex with girls; thus these men make alliances with organizations that advocate sex with boys. But I have another opinion. I believe these men crave the power imbalance, the transgression, and the child's naiveté that is intrinsic to adult-on-child sex, regardless of the child's gender. On the otherhand there are a lot of men who will stick it in anything that's walking (or crawling) and about its gender (or humanity for that matter) they couldn't care less.

With intellectual rationales and verbal subterfuge, pedophiles are waging a widespread disinformation campaign to gain public acceptance. But once one pushes past their liberal-chic front men and women to the average male abusers on trial in courtrooms, it becomes all too clear that what these men really want and do is to take, trade, publish and possess nude photographs of children - and fuck them, too, whenever possible.

Since many of their favorite activities are illegal in this country. the men who run these pedophile groups have a daunting public relations and damage control task. For example, the lawyer for *UD*, Lawrence Stanley, who is also a board member of NAMBLA and a European pedophile publication called *Padika* was arrested last year and charged with receiving and conspiring to import child pornography. (He was never convicted.) This occurred after he requested that a "lost" suitcase belonging to one of his "clients," Don Marcus, be delivered to his office at Tommy Boy Music in New York City. The suitcase, according to *New York Newsday* (12/10/91) contained at least 84 pictures of pre-teenage French children exposing their genitalia. Marcus, a family counselor and naturist (as is Stanley who is listed as an American Sunbathing Association attorney), had fled prosecution in 1989 and is currently wanted for importation of child pornography.

continued on next page
go back to main page

oh! BROTHER
Exposing the phallacies of the pro-feminist men's movement

Status quo